

New-York Daily Tribune

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 17, 1864.

To Correspondents.

No notice can be taken of Anonymous Communications. Whatever intended for insertion must be authenticated by the name and address of the writer—not necessarily for publication, but as a guaranty for his good faith. All business letters for this office should be addressed to "The Tribune," New-York. We cannot undertake to return rejected Communications.

THE CAMPAIGN.

Dispatches from the James give rather hints than positive intelligence of the operations on Sunday. Reports of the capture of Fort Darling, circulated yesterday, tended to confuse the public mind as to the real object of General Grant's movement. So far, we have no account of any demonstration by our forces except on the north bank of the James. Hancock's corps, employing a similar stratagem to that by which General Butler deceived the enemy at the outset of the campaign, embarked on transports in broad daylight on Sunday, and started down the river as if bound for Washington. At night they quietly returned, debarked on the left bank of the James, joining the Tenth corps, and on the morning of Monday, the 15th, moved rapidly against the Rebel works above Dutch Gap.

On the face of it, this movement means co-operation with General Butler's forces now engaged in cutting the canal across that peninsula. The James makes an extraordinary bend at a point beginning seven miles below Drury's Bluff, and forms a peninsula of which the river circuit is six miles, while the neck of it is less than a third of a mile in width. That neck is Dutch Gap. The peninsula is known as Farrah's Island, and its situation and importance will be seen by a glance at the map which we print this morning. Under the lee of that island have been stationed the Rebel gunboats, and at various points of the river's course about it are sunk the Rebel obstructions to the channel. To cut a canal through Dutch Gap will leave the Rebel fleet high and dry in the old river bed—supposing they choose or are forced to remain—and will open a new channel beyond the obstructions. It is said that above this point there are no obstacles except Fort Darling to the passage of our fleet up to Richmond.

We infer that Hancock's operations have reference to this canal project. If they have another purpose it will be developed in due time. It is clear, at any rate, that a considerable Rebel force was entrenched in the vicinity of this peninsula, and has been surprised, routed, and in good part captured, with loss of six or seven guns. But it does not seem probable there can have been any demonstration near the Rebel positions which cross the James close to Fort Darling. That bridge is strongly protected, and not likely to be carried or destroyed by a sudden assault.

The renewed activity which this enterprise betokens, is very unexpected to the Rebels and their Northern allies. Richmond papers have been exultingly declaring that the "siege of Petersburg" was raised, and that Gen. Grant had found it necessary to withdraw the main body of his troops for the defence of Washington. Copperhead papers in this city unwittingly, and to their deep chagrin on now discovering it, have aided to spread this belief—swiftly announcing and eagerly reiterating "We can not take Richmond." They have proclaimed the campaign a failure, and given the rebels to understand that they need expect no more trouble from General Grant on the James. Those journals desired nothing so much as to make their predictions come true, knowing that every victory of the Union arms diminishes their chances of success in the coming elections. Conceive their emotions on learning that they have been made to play into Gen. Grant's hands and delude their Richmond friends into hopes that told only a flattering tale. They may both begin to understand that the campaign is not abandoned—nor ever will be till the Rebellion goes under.

UNION-DISUNION.

The American Union is a great, abiding fact. It rests immutably on certain broad, manifest geographical, political and commercial necessities. A community of origin and of language among the great mass of our people intensifies the tendency of this broad domain toward cohesion and unity.

This tendency may be temporarily overborne, just as a heavy body may be lifted from and suspended at a distance above the earth—just as Portugal has for ages been torn from the side of Spain—just as Italy was for centuries parcelled out among a number of petty despots. In the end, however, the law of gravitation, political or material, is certain to assert itself.

Human Slavery is the disturbing, counteracting, centrifugal force in our political system. The palpable and only cause of our past, present and future alienation. No one ever met an English-speaking native of any one of our States who desired disunion unless on account of Slavery.

This Slavery is a great but not an enduring evil. All the better influences of our time fight against it with a force utterly unknown to darker ages. The Steam-Engine, and every other important invention (the Cotton-Gin apparently excepted), was on it incessantly and powerfully. There are not to-day half so many slaves in Christendom as there were in 1800; it is not at all probable that what remains of Slavery will much outlast the present century.

Free Labor would soon oust Slavery anywhere if competition were allowed; but it never is. Had "Yankees" been really at liberty to buy cotton and sugar estates and cultivate them by free labor, Slavery would long since have been run out of the South, to the great profit of all concerned; but the institution has defenses in the laws, the habits, the mobs, the bowie-knives and revolvers, of the South, which Free Labor has not been prepared to overcome. There never yet has been a day when a New-Englander buying a great South Carolina plantation at public sale, and proceeding to work it energetically by free labor, would not

have been regarded and treated as a dangerous public enemy.

Our Revolutionary sages comprehended and deplored the deadly antagonism, the "irrepressible conflict" between Freedom and Slavery; but they deemed the latter a blunder so palpable, a wrong so gross, that it must speedily vanish. Roger Sherman, in the Federal Convention of 1787, observed that "the Abolition of Slavery seemed to be growing in the United States;" and that "the good sense of the several States would probably by degrees complete it." Oliver Ellsworth remarked—"Slavery, in time, will not be a speck in our country;" and no one dissented or demurred. Nearly all the great men of that Convention denounced and reprobated Slavery; no one attempted to justify it.

Still, the extreme South—Georgia and South Carolina—clung to the abuse, insisted on its maintenance, demanded guaranties for its toleration so long as certain States should see fit to uphold it. Hence the provision that the Slave-Trade should be permitted for twenty years longer, backed by the sharp alternative, "No Slave-Trade, no Union." A majority encumbered to that ultimatum. The clause under which fugitive slaves are reclaimed owes its adoption to a similar requirement, though perhaps not so clearly expressed. And these immoral concessions were made by Gen. C. C. Pinckney in the South Carolina Convention his chief reasons for voting to ratify the Constitution.

Mr. Clay, in 1844, though on other grounds opposing the Annexation of Texas, urged that a permanent acquisition ought not to be refused on account of a temporary institution, like Slavery. The Northern Democratic politicians have a single nostrum for restoring and perpetuating the Union—further concessions, lower prostrations to the Slave Power. Slavery renders the South their rotten borough, always certain to give them a large majority of its votes in Congress and for President. No matter though it scourges and devastates the South, it nevertheless brings plenteous grist to the mill of "Democracy."

This policy feeds and strengthens, while professing only to placate, the Union's only formidable, inveterate enemy. It is short-sighted, selfish, leading by flowery paths down to perdition.

Such is the policy which the Democratic politicians are being drilled to reestablish at Chicago and in the ensuing Election. Should it prevail, the experience of two generations will have been ignored, and seas of blood and treasure lavished in vain.

"CONSERVATIVE" WAR POLICY.

We hear much of late from persons who protest that they will never give up the Union, yet in the same breath profess hostility to the war now waged in its defense—excited, they would probably say, by the kind of war thus waged. They want a conservative, conciliating, easy-going war, wherein all the private property of Rebels, but especially their property in slaves, shall be satisfactorily respected—wherein we shall hit them as if we loved them, and bring them by solid knocks to a realizing sense of the folly and wickedness of their revolt, and so to a glad return into the bosom of the Union. To the sincere apostles of this faith, we beg leave to commend the following considerations:

You are proposing nothing new. We had just such a War as you propose—so far as human infirmity would permit—for the twenty months succeeding the bombardment of Sumter. Gen. Scott, Gen. McClellan, Gen. Patterson, and Gen. Sherman were, each in his sphere, a disciple of your school, and so proclaimed themselves and were recognized. Everything that could be done in their day to coax and coddle the slaveholders and their white satellites into acquiescence in a restored Union. To this end, slaves, escaping from Rebel masters to our lines, sometimes bringing important intelligence, were surrendered to those masters' vengeance. Proclamation after proclamation was issued, surcharged with devotion to Slavery and the Union. Gen. McClellan declared that he would "crush with an iron hand" any insurrection of slaves. When Gen. Fremont declared free the slaves of Rebels in his department, the President suppressed the order. So with a like order of Gen. Hunter in the Department of the South. General Halleck ordered our lines to be closed against every negro fleeing to our camps. General Sherman tried to proclaim his devotion to Slavery to the South Carolinians, but could coax none of them to receive his proclamation. In short, nothing was left undone that could be done to assure the Slave Power that its only safety was to be found under the protecting regis of the Union.

And all in vain. Not a jot of this salt would lie on the tail of the shy bird, Slavery. Its instincts could not be thus cheated. It knew—no matter if its foes did not—that the Rebellion and Slavery were connected as root and tree, plant and flower. The Union might shut its eyes to this; Slavery could not. Our armies might shoot or stab, hang or drown, every negro taking refuge within our lines; but the masters knew that, if we were not Abolitionists, we ought to be, and would have to be if we attempted to earnest to put down the Rebellion. And so we "toiled all night and caught nothing." The Rebels did not even thank us for repelling their runaways from our lines.

It was while we were doing a large stroke of this negro-catching business that we were beaten off from Richmond to the James, and hurled back from Cedar Mountain to the defenses of Washington; while the army of Buell (an intense slave-hunter and hater) was cut off by regiments and brigades, and finally compelled to retrograde from Huntsville to the Ohio. Considering the immense preponderance of our armies at the outset, our campaigns of 1862 were by far more creditable and disastrous than those of any other year of the war.

Emancipation was threatened on the 22d of September, 1862, but was not initiated till January 1st, 1863. We had thus two nearly full years of the War for the Union under conservative leaders and a conservative policy. If the Rebels had been willing to return to the

Union with their "rights" guaranteed, they would have been most welcome. But they chose to stay away.

It is quackery, therefore—it is impudent assumption—to say, "Give the slaveholders their constitutional rights, and they will return to loyalty." If they had been content with these, secured by a Democratic Administration, they never would have seceded. They split the Democratic party at Charleston on purpose that they might escape from the very category which they are now proclaimed ready and eager to reënter. The pretense is baseless and impudent. They are fighting (as their Chief says) "for independence," and for nothing less. They want to be "let alone." If beaten, they must submit; but they are not coming back so long as they can help it.

CONCLUSION OF PEACE IN EUROPE.

The report which was received a few days ago by the Persia, that peace had been concluded between Denmark and the two great German Powers is fully confirmed by the later European advices which reached us yesterday. On the 1st of August a preliminary treaty of peace was signed by the plenipotentiaries of the three powers, in accordance with which the King of Denmark cedes all his rights to the Duchies of Schleswig, Holstein and Lauenburg, and to the Islands pertaining to them. As some districts in the Islands of Rönne, Syltöe and Föhr (in the North Sea, opposite the northwestern coast of Schleswig) belong to the Danish province of Jutland, the allies, as an equivalent for those districts will agree to a "rectification" of the southern frontier of Jutland.

Only a few weeks ago the King of Denmark had it in his power to obtain peace on much more favorable terms. At the London Conference all the powers represented had at last agreed that Holstein and Southern Schleswig should be relinquished by Denmark, but that the northern districts of Schleswig should be detached from this duchy and incorporated with Denmark proper. Denmark rejected the frontier line proposed by the Allied Powers, because she thought—in common with a large portion of the English people—that in case of the failure of the London Conference, the English Government was in honor bound by its repeated promises, to fly to the aid of Denmark. The Danes should have better known the duplicity and dishonesty of European diplomacy, which has never yet considered itself bound by promises, treaties, or any other thing regarded in private life as obligatory. The blunder—as political blunders usually do—has cost them dearly.

When the Danes, after the failure of the London Conference, recommenced the war, it was the common expectation, that in case of their defeat the victors would insist on the relinquishment by the Danes of all the territory which they have now ceded. The terms of peace have, therefore, produced no surprise, although they will be very offensive to the Governments of both England and France. The latter power protests against it in the name of the principle of nationality, maintaining that if solemn entreaties like that of London are set aside, it should only be to fall back upon a natural principle like that of nationality.

As the negotiations for peace have only been conducted between Denmark on the one hand, and Prussia and Austria on the other, the Duchies, which have been ceded by Denmark, have, of course, been ceded to Austria and Prussia. The German papers contain as yet no official announcement of the intentions of the Allied Powers respecting the future destinies of the Duchies. Bismark, undoubtedly, is even now desirous to annex them to Prussia, and it seems that of late he has found an ally for his scheme among a portion of the high aristocracy of Austria. But the Austrian Government is too much afraid of the dangerous combinations which the execution of such a scheme would call forth to be misled by Bismark. It can hardly be doubted that the minor German States, aided by the Liberal party at least of Prussia, would attempt to resist a territorial aggrandizement of Prussia by force of arms, and that France and even England (as in this case no danger would be incurred) would be eager to aid them. We do not believe that M. Bismark will find his royal master and the Emperor of Austria willing to brave such a combination, and we therefore expect that they will finally consent to hand over the Duchies to the Prince of Augustenburg, who has long since been recognized by the people of the Duchies, by the majority of the German Federal Diet, and a majority of the German people.

PERU AND SPAIN.

The difficulty between Peru and Spain, arising out of the seizure of the Chincha Islands, by the Spanish Admiral Pinzon, is still far from being settled. The Government of Spain, though not giving its explicit approval to the conduct of its representatives in Peru, continues to make demands, which she would never think of making against a great power, and which every country possessed of self-respect would resolutely refuse. The belief in the imminence of a war has, therefore, not yet subsided, and great preparations are still being made for the emergency.

Many correspondents of European and American papers have circulated the report, that the interest taken in this question by the other Republics of South America, had entirely ceased, and that Peru could not expect any aid from abroad. This report turns out to be incorrect. The manifestations of sympathy are as numerous and as marked as ever, and volunteers are flocking to Peru from all the States. All the Governments, with the one exception of that of Ecuador, are heart and soul with Peru, and though they may take no active part in a war against Spain, they will endeavor to strengthen Peru in an indirect manner. The Government of Chile is the most prominent in its manifestations of sympathy. The representative of Spain at Santiago complains to the Government of Chile, that meetings to express sympathy with Peru, have been held in several towns of the Republic; that volunteers have left for the Peruvian army, and that obstacles have been put in the way of Spanish steamers coaling in Chilean ports. In its reply to these charges, the Chilean

Government shows a spirit of manly independence. It unreservedly avows its sympathy with Peru. It declares itself unable and unwilling to repress the freedom of speaking within its boundaries, or the right of emigration to Peru, and it announces its determination not to permit the Spanish vessels occupying the Chincha Islands, or any other European war vessels attacking Peru, or any other American country, to take supplies in the waters or harbors of Chile.

It is therefore probable, that if the threatened war between Peru and Spain should take place, other South American States will be involved in it, and aid Peru in driving off the invader.

THEATERS.

The Winter Garden will open for the season tomorrow evening, under the direct management of Mr. Stuart—an advantage it has not hitherto enjoyed. During the recess it has been newly decorated in a style of extreme taste and elegance, and thoroughly supplied with fresh and comfortable furniture. Not a trace of the old dust and gloom is left. We believe that equally beneficial changes have been made in the administration of all the interior departments. The stage management will henceforth be prompt, energetic and artistic. The company has been well selected, and comprises a number of the best esteemed members of the theatrical profession. The orchestra will be directed by Mr. Robert Stoepel, who is unquestionably the best leader we have. Altogether, the prospects for the season's entertainment are excellent. The first few weeks will be given up to light comedy and farce performances, in which Mr. John S. Clarke will fulfill the principal characters. Mr. Edwin Booth will follow. The programme for the opening night consists of Sterling Coyne's comedy, "Everybody's Friend," which introduces Messrs. Clarke, Walcott, and Davenport, Mrs. Chaffron, Mrs. Sedley Brown, and Miss Carr; and the farce of "The Rough Diamond," with Mr. Clarke as Cousin Joe, and Mrs. Brown as Margery Seely. The prices at the Winter Garden remain the same as during the last season.

Mr. Dan Bryant's engagement at Wallack's Theater terminates this week. He will be followed by Miss Olive Logan, who is to appear next Monday evening in a drama never before represented here.

ENJOYMENT AT SARATOGA.—The Messrs. Leland will give the Grand Ball of the season on Friday evening of this week, at Union Hall, Saratoga. The well-known ability and energy of Mr. Warren Leland, who gives the affair his personal attention, is ample guarantee of complete success.

MEETING OF THE NEW-YORK TYPOGRAPHICAL UNION No. 6.—A meeting of this Union took place last night, at the Temperance Hall, Mr. E. A. Holmes, President, in the chair. There was a fair attendance. Immediately on the President calling the meeting to order, the reporters were informed that the meetings of the Society were private, and our reporter who was present had therefore to leave with the rest. We are consequently unable to give any account of the proceedings.

COUNTY COURT HOUSE LOAN.—Bids for this loan were made at the Controller's office yesterday afternoon. The amount of the loan is \$200,000. There were thirty-six bidders in all; the total amount bid for exceeds \$700,000. The bids varied from \$1,000 to \$100,000.

THE PEOPLE'S COLLEGE.—The Rev. Amos Brown has resigned the Presidency of this noble embryo, after devoting to it six or seven of the best years of his life, during which a spacious edifice has been erected, on a goodly estate which also belongs to the enterprise, while the generous United States land-grant has been conditionally entrusted to this College. Mr. Brown has been a most faithful, efficient worker, and his efforts have been crowned with a large measure of success.

THE GERMAN FESTIVAL.—The German Festival at Jones' Woods last evening, was well attended. The time was devoted principally to music, dancing and feasting. Lagerbeer was consumed in vast quantities and there was a great demand for light wines and ice creams. The festivities were continued until a late hour, and up to the time of our reporter's leaving everything passed off pleasantly.

COLLISION AT BERGEN TUNNEL.—A freight train on the Erie railway, going westward through the Bergen Tunnel yesterday forenoon, was overtaken by a passenger train of the Morris and Essex road, going at a much more rapid speed, and the result was a crash between the locomotive and rear freight cars, which were badly broken up, and the engine was badly damaged. Reports were in circulation that a number of persons were injured, but from all the information that could be obtained, only one man (the brakeman) was injured, and he but slightly. Considerable delay was caused to other trains until the debris was cleared from the track.

RECRUITING IN THE IRREL STATES.—An agent sent out by the authorities of Jersey City to recruit in the rebel States, from Beauvoir writes to Mayor Cleveland that recruiting agents are far more numerous than able bodied blacks desirous of going into service. The prices offered for recruits range from \$300 to \$500.

BOY UNDER ARREST FOR HOMICIDE.—Captain Walling, of the Twentieth Precinct, arrested Michael Ayres, a boy of fifteen years, upon the accusation of John Woods, who alleged that on the 4th inst. the prisoner, himself, and James Cleary were bathing in the dock at the foot of Thirtieth street, and that Ayres pushed Cleary from the pier and declined to aid in rescuing him. Down to the time of the affidavit which Woods has made it was supposed that Cleary had been accidentally drowned; but according to Wood's statement the drowning was wilful homicide, and Coroner Haney has held Ayres to answer therefor.

NEW OUTSIDE LINE OF STEAMERS TO NEW YORK.—Our merchants will be gratified to learn that an outside line of steamers to New York is again to go into existence, under the management of Wm. J. Taylor & Co., of this city. It is needless for us to expatiate upon the importance of this enterprise, as the public have been so seriously inconvenienced since the withdrawal of the "Sanford line" that comment is unnecessary. Every pound of freight now passing between New York and New York must pay revenue to the Camden and Amboy Railroad Company, and the public will hail with joy the establishment of an entirely independent line, running winter and summer. The charter for this purpose was procured last winter at Harrisburg, under the name of the Coastwise Steamship Company, with an authorized capital of \$500,000; and as the parties at the head of it are all men of capital and energy, there is no doubt but what the line will become very popular and well patronized. The line will consist of four first class sea-going propellers, of 500 tons each, two of which are entirely new vessels, built expressly for this route, and are now nearly completed at Craney's wharf. All the steamers will be ready and commence running by the latter part of September, leaving each port daily, and devoted exclusively to the freight business and carrying of emigrant or second class passengers between the two cities. The freight capacity will be large, and shippers will have superior inducements offered them by this line.—Philadelphia North American.

From Washington.

WASHINGTON, Aug. 15, 1864.

INDIAN AFFAIRS.

The Creek Chiefs, in a letter to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, dated Fort Gibson, July 16th, make an eloquent appeal for help. They say the whole Cherokee country is a waste, and they can see nothing but starvation before them during the coming winter. Months intervene between the arrival of trains, and even now they have but a scanty subsistence. At least 30,000 Indians are to be fed. These chiefs represent a large portion of those who were driven by the rebels to Kansas, but who did not return to their own country in time to raise ample crops. The Indian Bureau, with its accustomed promptness and humanity, will exert itself to afford the required relief.

INTERNAL REVENUE.

According to the ruling of the Internal Revenue Bureau, real estate agents, who have taken out licenses as commercial brokers under the old law, are not subject to re-examination under the new law.

THE NEW LOAN.

The subscriptions to the Seven Thirty Loan, as reported to the Treasury Department, for the last three days, amounts to \$3,019,000, including \$1,229,500 to-day.

A SMALL RAID.

The mail boat from City Point to-day reports that Saturday afternoon a body of our troops embarked on transports at City Point, and moved up the river during the night, and under cover of the fire of the gunboats, effected a landing near Dutch Gap. The object of this movement is stated to be the dislodgment of a considerable force of the enemy, who had entrenched themselves on the river, and, possibly, also as a reconnaissance to ascertain what troops Lee has before Richmond, and if he is sending any considerable reinforcement to Early.

FIGHT WITH GUERRILLAS.

Captain Fleming, with sixty men of the Sixteenth New-York Cavalry, who was sent on a scout, was attacked near Fairfax Station, Thursday, by a body of Mosby's guerrillas, and Captain Fleming and eight of his men were killed, and most of the others taken prisoners. Captain Fleming's body was found near the road, and taken to Falls Church and buried.

REBEL SCOUTS.

Sunday morning several rebel scouts were seen near Fort Schneider at Annandale. They fired upon our pickets in several directions. Sergeant Lemian, of the Sixteenth New-York Cavalry, who was on picket on the Braddock road, was killed. Our scouts are on the alert on the hills, valleys, and through the dense woods, but are unable to catch these picket-shooting assassins and marauding highwaymen.

The Tallahassee—Heavy Firing Heard of Montauk.

PROVIDENCE, R. I., Aug. 16. Heavy and continuous firing was heard at Newport and Stonington this afternoon from the direction of Montauk Point.

The Brig James Crosby Rescued.

BOSTON, Aug. 16, 1864. The brig A. C. Titcomb from New-Orleans, has arrived here. She reports as follows: On the 14th inst., off Cape Cod, fell in with the brig James Crosby full of water, before reported abandoned. Took her in tow and brought her to this port.

Thanks to Admiral Farragut.

OFFICIAL LETTER FROM SECRETARY WELLS.

WASHINGTON, Aug. 16, 1864. The Secretary of the Navy has addressed the following to Admiral Farragut.

Navy Department.

WASHINGTON, D. C., Aug. 15, 1864.

SIR: Your dispatch of the 5th instant, stating that you had on the morning of that day entered Mobile Bay, passing between Forts Morgan and Gaines, and encountering and overcoming the Rebel fleet, I had the satisfaction to receive this day. Some preliminary accounts of your operations had previously reached us through Rebel channels.

Again it is my pleasure and my duty to congratulate you and your brave associates on an achievement unequalled in our service by any other commander, and only surpassed by that unparalleled naval triumph of the squadron under your command in the spring of 1862, when, proceeding up the Mississippi you passed Forts Jackson and St. Philip, and, overcoming all obstructions, captured New Orleans, and restored unobstructed navigation to the commercial emporium of the great central valley of the Union. The bay of Mobile was not only fortified and guarded by forts and batteries on the shore and by submerged obstructions, but the rebels had also collected there a formidable fleet, commanded by their highest naval officer, a former captain in the Union navy, who, false to the Government and the Union, had deserted his country in the hour of peril, and leveled his guns against the flag which it was his duty to have defended.

The possession of Mobile Bay, which you have acquired, will close the illicit traffic which has been carried on by running the blockade in that part of the Gulf, and gives point and value to the success you have achieved. Great results in warfare seldom attained without great risks, and it was not expected that the harbor of Mobile would be secured without disaster. The loss of the gallant Cravens and his brave companions, with the Teumseh, a vessel that was impregnable to the guns of Fort Morgan, by a concealed torpedo, was a casualty against which no human foresight could guard. While the nation awards cheerful honors to the living, she will ever hold in grateful remembrance the memory of the gallant and lamented dead, who perilled their lives for their country, and died in her cause.

To you and the brave officers and sailors of your squadron who participated in this great achievement, the Department tenders its thanks and those of the Government and country.

Very respectfully, &c., GIBSON WELLS, Secretary of the Navy.

Rear-Admiral DAVID G. FARAGUT, commanding, &c.

Railroad Accident.

PROVIDENCE, R. I., August 16. Miss Carrie Eldridge and John Doherty were killed by a train of cars at the Charles street crossing of the Worcester Railroad, in this city to-day. Two other persons were injured. They were mill operatives, and were walking on the track.

Great Fire at Quebec—Estimated Loss over \$100,000.

QUEBEC, August 14. About ten o'clock last night a fire broke out in Peters' Saw Mill, Grant street, St. Roche, and spread with great rapidity, till some forty houses were destroyed. Two entire blocks of buildings, formed by the intersection of St. Vallier, Fleury, St. Dominique, Grant, and Desparie streets, were destroyed. Several houses were pulled down in order to prevent the flames from communicating with other blocks. Most of the buildings consumed were composed of brick. Loss estimated at over \$100,000.

OPERATIONS IN THE SHENANDOAH VALLEY.

OFFICIAL FROM SECRETARY STANTON.

The Rebels Poorly off for Plunder.

AFFAIRS AT PETERSBURG AND ATLANTA.

WASHINGTON, Aug. 16, 1864.

To Maj.-Gen. JOHN A. DIX: A telegram from General Sheridan's command, dated August 14th, at Cedar Creek, was received this morning. It states that except Mosby's and White's guerrillas there is no enemy this side of the Blue Ridge; that Sheridan's teams are all up, and that his army is in fine condition.

General Sheridan, in a dispatch of the 11th inst., reports that the stories of plunder taken from Maryland by the rebels are all humbug. They have very little, just enough to subsist on and no more, most of which has been taken from the Shenandoah Valley.

In another despatch, dated the 12th of August, he says:—General Early's train is a very small one, not exceeding 250 wagons, and the stories about accumulated plunder from Maryland are untrue.

The Department has received the unofficial report from Fort Monroe that movements were being made yesterday in front of Petersburg; but owing to the telegraph being down, no information has been received from headquarters.

The Department is without any intelligence from Atlanta.

The latest rebel papers received here say nothing about Mobile since the capture of Fort Gaines.

EDWIN M. STANTON, Sec. of War.

Our Advance into Strasburg—We Retire and again Occupy the Town—The Rebels in a Strong Position.

Special Dispatch to The N. Y. Tribune.

HEADQUARTERS OF GENERAL SHERIDAN, NEAR MIDDLETON, VA., Sunday night, Aug. 15.

Including my hurried dispatch of this morning, I stated on the authority of a current report, which lack of time prevented me from investigating, that the enemy had withdrawn to his works behind Strasburg, and that many believed him in readiness to accept battle whenever offered. The enemy's pickets, stationed a short distance beyond Cedar Creek, were withdrawn on Friday night, and on yesterday morning our cavalry entered and took possession of Strasburg. The Rebel pickets soon after reappearing, the cavalry withdrew, assuming a new line within three miles of the town.

The explanation of this manoeuvre on the part of the enemy may possibly be had on the supposition that he had received reinforcement in sufficient numbers to warrant the acceptance of battle in his chosen position near the town. A reconnaissance, consisting of the Jersey Brigade, Col. Pelrose of the 6th, and several regiments, each from the 8th and 10th corps, was made to-night, at six o'clock, resulting in the pushing back of the enemy's skirmish line to within a short distance of the town.

The enemy did not seem particularly desirous of holding his line, and as our skirmish line supported by steadily advancing battalions approached his position, retired toward the town, keeping up a lively fire as he went. Whether the enemy intends to fight at this point still remains a matter of conjecture.

Yesterday and to-day our troops have rested quietly in camp. Everything is in readiness for a movement, however, and should the enemy remain in his present position, active operations will undoubtedly soon commence. The necessity of fully ascertaining the enemy's present strength will be seen at a glance, and may account for the delay. The work occupied by evening on Fisher Hill and vicinity are naturally of the most formidable character and prudence demands the exercise of the greatest circumspection in assaulting them. Gen. Sheridan's headquarters are at Bell Grove, the residence of Mr. Benjamin Cooley, one mile from Cedar Creek Crossing, Generals Cooper, Fremont, Sigel and Hunter, have respectively occupied the same situation at different times during the war.

A rebel spy was hung near Middleton, where he was recognized by several officers as a bounty jumper from our army and a spy in the service of the enemy. A court-martial decreed the punishment of death, which sentence was executed to-day.

The weather is very warm and rain greatly needed in the valley." A general hospital has been established at Winchester.

MONDAY MORNING, Aug. 15.

Our forces are now in possession of Strasburg. On our advance toward the town the enemy, whose force consisted of but a skirmish line, fell back out of the town, leaving it in our possession. The enemy has abandoned his works beyond Strasburg, and is believed to be retreating towards Mount Jackson.

T. C. D.

FROM THE MISSISSIPPI.

Reported Capture of River Steamers by the Rebels.

INDIANAPOLIS, Ind., Aug. 15.

The rebels under Col. Johnson, estimated at fifteen hundred, captured three steamers near Shawneetown, Ill., on Saturday night. The steamers were loaded with fat cattle, belonging to the Government.

Forces have been stationed along the Ohio river to prevent the rebels from crossing the Indiana border.

At last accounts the rebels were ferrying the cattle across the Kentucky river.

It is now supposed they will not cross over into Indiana.

Another Version.

CAIRO, Ill., Aug. 15.

About five hundred rebel cavalry, under Col. Johnson, crossed the Ohio river into Illinois, at Saline Bar, on Saturday.

The Steamers Kate Robinson, Jimmy Perkins, Nightingale, Fanny Brandon, and Clara Hall were grounded at that place and were captured by them.

These steamers had a large amount of stock on board, and those in charge of them had to pay several thousand dollars to save them from destruction.

Soldiers to Vote in Connecticut—The Quota of Hartford.

HARTFORD, Ct., Aug. 15.

The vote to-day, in this State, on the amendment allowing soldiers to vote, is small. The returns indicate a large majority in favor of the soldiers.

A town meeting held here this evening